



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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17 MARCH 1965

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1. Vietnam

Premier Quat continues in an optimistic and determined mood. Yesterday he told Deputy Ambassador Johnson that he will soon convene the National Legislative Council, which he believes will provide additional popular underpinning for his regime. He also plans to enroll several prominent South Vietnamese in an all-out campaign against "neutralism and defeatism."

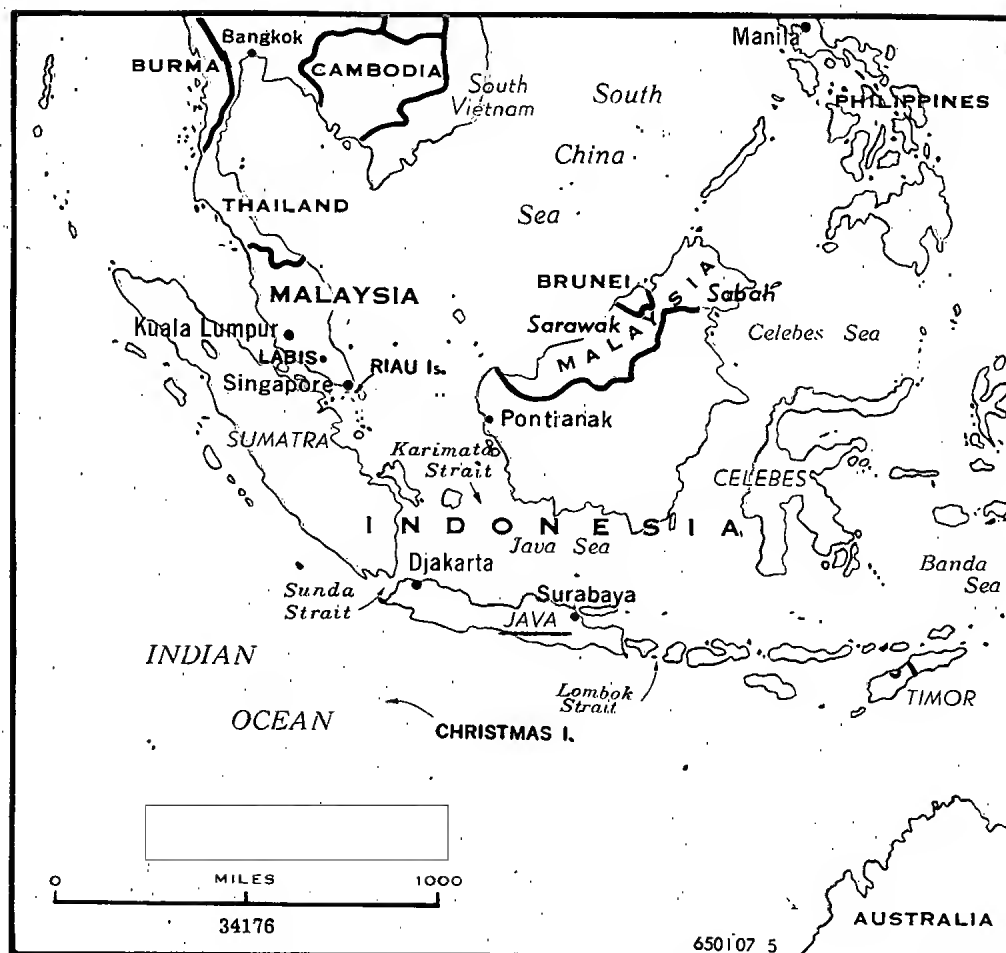
Press reports say that police have prevented a new "peace" group in Saigon from holding a press conference. Quat had told Ambassador Taylor earlier that he had information of a new, large peace movement which he hoped to nip in the bud.

There is some tenuous evidence in North Vietnamese communications that a Soviet transport plane may soon visit Hanoi. The information is not yet firm, but the plane is of a type which suggests it would be carrying Soviet VIPs.

Additional post-strike photography of Phu Qui taken on 16 March indicates that damage was more severe than was revealed earlier. It now appears that there were 55 buildings in the target complex. Eighteen were completely destroyed and 11 severely damaged.

2. North Vietnam

North Vietnam's antiaircraft capability has substantially increased during the last year, particularly since the Tonkin Gulf affair. Most of its approximately 1,000 antiaircraft weapons are believed to be 57 and 88-mm. or lighter. No heavy weapons--100-mm. or larger--have been detected, but their introduction is expected. Several new AAA sites are under construction, but no SAM sites have been observed.



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3. Cyprus

It is now apparent that the Turks have been aware of the presence of SAM equipment on the island for several days, [redacted]. While Turkish forces have been alerted, there is no sign so far of the strong reaction which we have expected from Ankara.

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4. Indonesia

Political and religious unrest continues to grow in Indonesia. Besides the recently suppressed naval mutiny in Surabaya, there have been several clashes between rival political and religious groups and between peasants and government authorities. The conflict between Moslems and Communists in Java has reached major proportions [redacted]

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(See map.)

These disturbances are symptomatic of the long-run deterioration of the Indonesian regime. They do not, however, pose an immediate threat to Sukarno, as long as he retains the loyalty of the armed forces.

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5. Congo

Ugandan forces, presumably in Congolese territory, are reported to have fired on Col Hoare's column of mercenaries and Congolese Army troops just north of Mahagi. The column had left Bunia on Monday in its drive to seal off the Congo's northeast border. (See map.)

Hoare has asked Tshombe's government to warn Uganda that he will retaliate for any further attacks. Ambassador Godley has sent a US military officer to urge restraint on Hoare.

6. Arab States

Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya do not intend to break relations with West Germany, despite the allegedly unanimous resolution issued by last Sunday's Arab foreign ministers' meeting in Cairo. Egypt has apparently carried along the remaining eight Arab states on the issue, however. Five of them say they will also recognize East Germany. In addition, Arab economic sanctions may be levied against the West Germans if Bonn takes any more "hostile" actions.

7. USSR

The Soviets may attempt a manned space launch in the next day or so. A large number of instrumentation and support ships are on station,

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[redacted]. The Moscow rumor mill is active as it was before the three-man shot.

The ships have been deployed for nearly a month, and the failure of what we believe was a trial run--Cosmos 57--on 22 February probably set back Soviet plans for an earlier manned flight. The pattern of ship deployment, however, is somewhat different from that on 22 February. The Soviets may be trying to beat the well-publicized US Gemini flight scheduled next week.

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